2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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156 183 life. While he is busily making a living, gaining respect and maintaining status he apparently goes through a continuing process of re-evaluating these activities in the light of changing conditions and new information. Such re-evaluation takes the dual form of private thought or meditation and of informal public discussions about his clique, their friends, and their various attitudes to life. So important is this re-evaluation process that many men can be seen devoting a major part of their waking time to it. The womenfolk are equally concerned with re-evaluation through conversations, but are obliged to work physically at the same time (Harkness, 1832, 114; Metz, 1864, 98–99; Benbow, 1930, 3–5; Vivekanandam Pillai, 1937, 247; Subrahmanyam, 1962, 5–6; see Plate 10). In such discussions Badagas experience the need to make manifest from time to time the norms by which their behaviour is guided. This process not only makes the norms explicit but reinforces their validity in most cases, too. At the same time ambiguous or anachronistic norms are subject to scrutiny and then modification or total rejection. In view of this re-evaluation 121 process it is no longer enough to know that a modern Badaga is a male of a certain age, from a certain village and phratry or of one particular category in their social system in order to predict how he will conduct himself in any given situation. We also need to understand the more transient social formations and networks with which he is associated, the social functions of these formations and networks, and also the manner in which their members are recruited. As I have observed on many occasions, the play of 178 elementary logic, of conflicting orientations, personalities and ● 521 proverbs, the relevance of everything said to everyone within earshot are all factors making for fascinating and valuable conversation among Badagas. Slowly yet dynamically their culture is changing, not simply through external programmes devised for the modernization of India, but consciously, indeed conscientiously, through this tedious and time-consuming procedure. Faced with the need to vote for a variety of parliamentary candidates, confronted with propaganda on the value of family planning or with another current topic, individuals discuss the issues, try to reach a consensus and then act accordingly.

184 178 Those cleavages in the social system across which conversation is not permissible are barriers to the free flow of communication, and on either side of these barriers variant orientations develop. To understand cultural change we should pay some attention to

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
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with non-Badaga prostitutes. The lower-class group, as we shall see below (3.7—*c*), has some extra-marital sexual contact with a wide range of other Badaga men, including of course some who have also had relations with diseased prostitutes. Since the four chosen villages are representative in their subcultures of these four phratries, are all accessible to therapists and midwives, are located within three miles of each other in the middle of the plateau, are all at the same elevation of about 6,500 feet, but in no instances were using contraceptives in 1963, it is difficult to avoid explaining the divergence between the average number of children in these families by any other means than this hypothesis: that *there is a positive correlation between socio-ritual status* (*or extent of religious orthodoxy*) *and the fertility of women*. I realize this may sound like moralizing; but it is the census data and not I myself that shows the "good," orthodox Badaga parents to have more live births than those who indulge more in inter-community, extra-marital relations.

The number of stillbirths and abortions is something I know nothing about. In one well-to-do Adikiri farming family which happened to include two skilled midwife-therapists, a woman married at the age of 12 conceived first at 18, and then had a total of five live births and another five miscarriages or neonate deaths. I have no reason to believe either that her husband (whom I know well) was diseased or that her birth history is really atypical.

Sex Education

3.2. A useful way of approaching the matter of Badaga sexual practice is to ask how the individual acquires his knowledge of the matter. The answer is that diverse sources are available, including conversation with others, observation of men and animals, and experimentation. We shall elaborate on each of these in turn.

Conversation on sexual matters occurs not only with members of one's own sex but also with lovers. Since in each case the party with whom one holds such conversation may be either an age-mate or some older person, there is a relatively free flow of information from one generation to another, and between the two sexes. Nonetheless some propriety is observed in seeking the information. Parents do not usually give any sex instruction to their children, nor do elder brothers generally give it to younger siblings or elder sisters to their younger sisters. The mother's brother, who is a kind of